

Dark Crimson Underwing (*Catocala sponsa* L.) was taken by someone else. A year to remember for sugaring enthusiasts. — M. R. BRITTON, 67 Bramley Garth, Appletree Village, York YO3 0NQ.

THE EMPEROR MOTH: *SATURNIA PAVONIA* L. IN EPPING FOREST, ESSEX. — It would seem worthy of placing on record the occurrence of *Saturnia pavonia* in Wanstead Park, the southernmost portion of Epping Forest, during 1984. Two males were very quickly assembled there at about 4.00 p.m. on 22nd April using a female reared from ova obtained in Berkshire in 1983. This would appear to be only the second record of *pavonia* in Epping Forest since 1903: the first being a gravid female taken at the Epping Forest Conservation Centre light trap on 8th May, 1981 (*vide Ent. Rec.* 93:158). Wanstead Park has been fairly thoroughly surveyed for Lepidoptera for over five years, and in that time I have never seen adult emperors, nor found any of the earlier stages, and there is consequently some doubt as to whether or not the species has persisted undetected here.

In Essex as a whole the species is fairly widespread, although in this south-western corner it is apparently not numerous. A single larva was brought to me for identification during 1981 by a workman clearing brambles (*Rubus fruticosus* agg.) from a ditch at Redbridge, some four kilometres to the north east, whilst slightly further afield it occurs sparingly at Hainault Forest.

Recent changes in the management of Wanstead Park by the Conservation of Epping Forest have included much felling of sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*) and dead elms (*Ulmus* sp.) and this has resulted in a tremendous spread of brambles to cover large areas in dense, impenetrable patches. Possibly the species has indeed persisted here at low level and is now taking advantage of the increase in one of its principal foodplants in this region. I would certainly urge Essex Lepidopterists to try assembling this species elsewhere in Epping Forest during 1985. — C. W. PLANT, Assistant Curator (Natural Sciences, Biology), Passmore Edwards Museum, Romford Road, Stratford, E15 4LZ.

REMARKABLE ABUNDANCE OF *QUERCUSIA QUERCUS* L.: PURPLE HAIRSTREAK IN 1983. — I am surprised nobody else has commented on this fact and begin to wonder if my experiences are shared by others. During one excursion on August 3, *Q. quercus* appeared to be present every time I stopped the car in East Kent, always in the vicinity of tall isolated oaks. The first occasion was in East Blean Wood, where parts had been felled leaving the oaks untouched. The first oak tree revealed half a dozen butterflies, the second had perhaps a dozen flying round the top and occasionally coming down to settle on the road surface. As I stood and looked around, I was able to see that all the distant oaks were swarming with *quercus*. A little further on I stopped the car in Owls Hatch Lane, to the north of Thornden Wood. Within a minute, several